

PART V

CROPS

Major Crops

According to the Census of Agriculture, harvested cropland in Snohomish County amounted to 35,653 acres in 1959. An overwhelming proportion of the county's cropland is devoted to hay. Emphasis in raising feed crops reflects the importance of dairying in the area. Other important crops are vegetables, berries and small grains.

Clover-timothy hay is the dominant crop in Snohomish County in terms of acreage. Besides baled and loose hay a large acreage also is devoted to producing grass silage. Other hay crops of importance are small grains and wild hay. Among the vegetable crops, green peas and sweet corn are the most important. Most of the county's berry acreage is in strawberries and raspberries. Oats represents the leading small grain crop in the area.

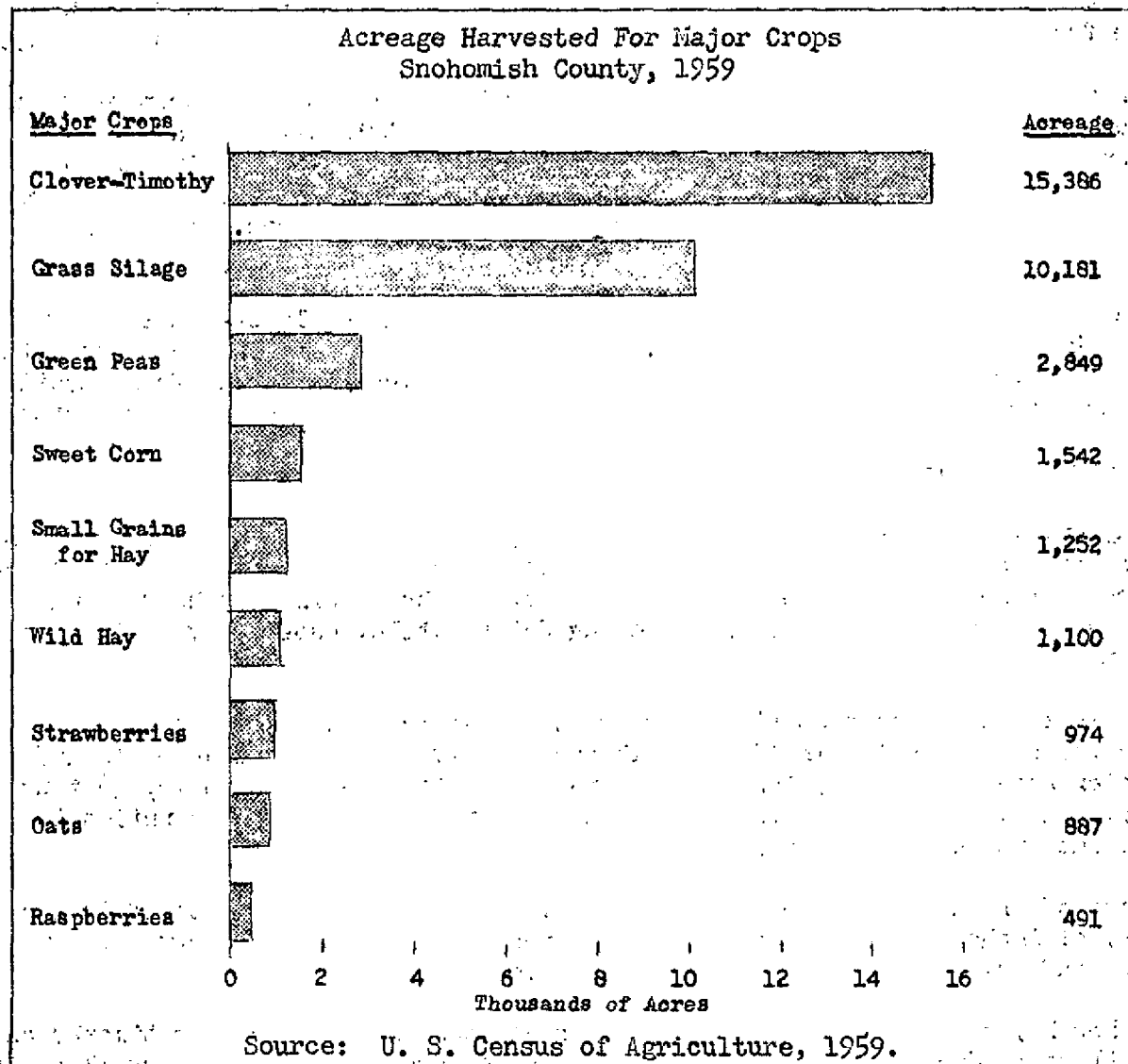


Figure 10. Major Crop Acreages, Snohomish County, 1959.

Crop Trends

A number of changes are apparent in the emphasis and acreages Snohomish County farmers have given to leading crops. These show the influence of new market outlets and improved facilities for the distribution and storage of farm products. They also reflect technological advances in agriculture. New food processing methods have affected the acreages of various crops. Indeed, changes of crop patterns have resulted from the farmer's own initiative in experimentation with different crops and types of farming.

Snohomish County agriculture through specialization and intensification has become increasingly more valuable to the regional economy. The county has become important in specialized crops such as berries and vegetables for processing along with the growing of hay and grain.

Hay Crops

For many years, the most important crop in Snohomish County from the acreage standpoint has been hay. Relatively constant in acreage, it has slightly increased from about 25,500 acres in 1920 to 27,799 in 1950 and 30,057 acres in 1959.

In terms of acreage, clover-timothy hay is the most prominent crop of Snohomish County. This hay crop is well-suited to the county's climate and to the level and gently sloping terrain. The heavy dependency of local dairymen on hay is another reason for the large acreage in the county. Since 1939, the acreage of clover-timothy hay has ranged between 19,400 and 15,000 acres. Yields have generally averaged better than 2 tons per acre annually.

In 1962, there was a total of 17,000 acres devoted to clover-timothy hay from which 34,600 tons were harvested. Snohomish ranked fifth in the state both in terms of acreage and production in that year. Clover-timothy is found mostly in the area from Stanwood to Arlington and from Snohomish to Monroe. This crop also is found on farms between Arlington and Snohomish and in both the upper Stillaguamish and lower Skykomish Valleys.

Hay cut for silage has become increasingly more important in Snohomish County. Farmers have found that cutting fields for silage furnishes a high quality succulent feed and reduces feed losses caused by wet weather during hay harvesting. Silage is used most extensively for feeding dairy cattle, especially during the winter months.

While there are no statistics for grass silage in censuses prior to 1950, 2,977 acres were reported in 1950, 7,517 acres in 1954 and 10,181 acres in 1959. Production rose from 17,907 tons in 1950 to 50,769 tons in 1954 and 78,348 tons in 1959. In 1959, Snohomish ranked second among the 39 Washington counties in acreage and production of grass silage.

Most of the grass silage in the county is produced on farms located in the vicinity of Snohomish and Monroe. The northwestern part of the county between Stanwood and Arlington also is an important producing area.

Other hay crops are grown on a lesser scale compared with clover-timothy and grass silage in Snohomish County. In 1959, there were 1,252 acres of small grains cut for hay, 1,100 acres of wild hay, 180 acres of alfalfa, 113 acres of vetch and

1,845 acres of other tame hays. In recent years the county's alfalfa acreage has dropped steadily from around 1,000 acres in 1957 to 140 acres in 1962.

Table 16. Clover-Timothy Hay and Alfalfa Hay
Snohomish County, 1939-1962

Year	Clover-Timothy Hay			Alfalfa Hay		
	Harvested Acres	Yield (Tons Per Acre)	Production (Tons)	Harvested Acres	Yield (Tons Per Acre)	Production (Tons)
1939	19,400	2.4	46,600	370	3.0	1,100
1940	17,300	2.5	42,400	410	4.0	1,620
1941	17,500	2.3	40,600	370	4.1	1,500
1942	18,600	2.3	42,200	260	4.0	1,040
1943	18,400	2.4	43,300	210	2.9	600
1944	18,000	2.3	41,600	180	3.0	540
1945	17,900	2.1	38,000	180	3.0	540
1946	17,500	2.3	39,400	200	2.8	560
1947	16,500	2.3	37,700	190	3.0	570
1948	17,600	2.4	41,800	300	3.2	960
1949	16,300	2.1	34,200	480	2.5	1,200
1950	15,800	2.4	37,900	580	2.1	1,210
1951	15,500	2.2	33,500	650	2.0	1,300
1952	17,000	2.2	37,400	660	4.1	2,700
1953	16,000	2.0	32,000	880	3.6	3,200
1954	16,400	2.1	34,700	940	2.0	1,860
1955	16,700	2.1	35,000	1,010	3.0	3,000
1956	15,000	2.0	30,200	860	2.5	2,140
1957	16,600	2.4	39,700	1,000	3.1	3,100
1958	15,400	1.9	30,000	500	2.0	1,000
1959	15,400	2.0	30,800	180	3.0	540
1960	16,000	2.0	32,000	160	2.0	320
1961	17,900	1.9	34,100	150	2.2	330
1962	17,000	2.0	34,600	140	2.3	320

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Vegetables

Commercial vegetable or truck farming has become of increasing importance in Snohomish County. The Census of Agriculture in 1920 recorded only 206 acres in commercial and other vegetables in the county. By 1940, the vegetable acreage had increased to nearly 4,500 acres. In 1962, Snohomish County farmers harvested vegetables from well over 9,000 acres--about twice the 1940 acreage. According to the latest Census of Agriculture (1959), Snohomish ranked fifth among the Washington counties in vegetable acreage.

Vegetables form an important crop in Snohomish County in terms of value of sales. In 1959, vegetables sold amounted to 20 percent of the value of all crops marketed off farms. Vegetables were grown on about 13 percent of Snohomish County's cropland in 1959. A total of 112 farms reported vegetables harvested for sale while 1,675 farms raised vegetables for home use in that year.

Table 17. Vegetable Crops: Green Peas, Sweet Corn and Cauliflower
Snohomish County, 1954-1963

Year	Green Peas (Processing)		Sweet Corn		Cauliflower	
	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)
1954	4,000	4,800	1,400	3,200	20	50
1955	4,400	5,280	700	1,190	25	60
1956	4,890	10,410	1,500	4,800	100	580
1957	4,260	8,530	1,300	5,540	90	350
1958	3,450	5,860	1,100	4,950	110	570
1959	3,100	6,200	1,600	7,200	100	510
1960	3,300	6,600	3,360	14,600	170	1,000
1961	3,300	7,600	3,350	15,400	90	700
1962	5,100	9,700	2,700	13,500	170	1,000
1963	5,600	11,800	3,250	18,540	90	500

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Table 18. Vegetable Crops: Snap Beans, Celery and Cucumbers
Snohomish County, 1954-1963

Year	Snap Beans		Celery		Cucumbers	
	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)
1954	60	180	10	100	35	70
1955	30	125	10	120	25	90
1956	30	150	10	120	50	175
1957	30	150	8	100	50	230
1958	30	150	20	220	40	240
1959	30	150	10	150	40	200
1960	--	--	10	150	40	200
1961	20	120	10	150	50	350
1962	20	90	10	100	40	200
1963	30	150	20	250	30	150

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

The single most important vegetable crop in terms of acreage in Snohomish County is green peas grown for processing. Land devoted to this crop has recently increased from 3,100 acres in 1959 to 5,600 acres in 1963. According to the 1959 Census of Agriculture, Snohomish County ranked 24th in green peas acreage among the nation's counties. In 1963, Snohomish County accounted for over 10 percent of the state's green pea production.

Sweet corn is another valuable processing crop grown in Snohomish County. Acreage has about tripled since 1958. In 1963, about 18,540 tons were harvested from a total of 3,250 acres. Snohomish County's production represented 12 percent of the state figure in that year.

Snohomish is among the Puget Sound counties where most of the state's cauliflower production takes place. In recent years, the county acreage has fluctuated

between 90 and 170 acres. The 1963 county production represented 12 percent of the state total while the corresponding figure in the previous year was 20 percent.

Vegetables grown on a lesser scale in Snohomish County are snap beans, cucumbers, broccoli, celery and lettuce. The combined acreage in the county of these five crops amounted to 110 acres in 1963. Acreages have remained relatively steady in recent years with the exception of broccoli which has declined greatly. Cabbages and carrots were grown on a minor commercial scale until very recently.

Table 19. Vegetable Crops: Broccoli, Cabbage, Carrots and Lettuce
Snohomish County, 1954-1963

Year	Broccoli		Cabbage		Carrots		Lettuce			
							Late Spring		Early Fall	
	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)	Acres	Prod. (Tons)
1954	760	2,280	--	--	10	100	10	100	5	50
1955	725	2,500	--	--	10	100	10	100	5	50
1956	560	1,860	--	--	10	170	10	90	10	70
1957	290	870	--	--	10	140	15	130	10	60
1958	170	680	10	100	10	110	20	120	20	100
1959	120	560	10	100	10	110	20	140	--	--
1960	100	400	10	100	10	100	--	--	--	--
1961	70	230	10	100	20	300	30	150	--	--
1962	80	250	--	--	40	1,100	30	150	--	--
1963	30	110	--	--	--	--	30	200	--	--

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Berries

Snohomish is one of the important berry producing counties in Washington. The major berry crops in the county are strawberries and red raspberries. Lesser emphasis has been placed on blueberries and blackberries which also are grown commercially. The county's relatively mild winters and location near population centers from which labor can be readily obtained during harvest time are factors advantageous to the growing of berries.

In 1959, Snohomish County ranked twenty-fourth among all U. S. counties in strawberry acreage. From about 1,000 acres in 1959, the acreage has decreased to an estimated 700 acres in 1964. Even so, Snohomish County was the state's fourth largest producer of strawberries in 1964 with 3,535,000 pounds and this amounted to about 9 percent of Washington's production. Farmland devoted to strawberries reached a high of 1,650 in 1952 and 1953, dropped to 350 acres after the disastrous 1955 freeze, increased to 1,080 acres in 1961 but acreage has been on a downward trend since then. Northwest strawberries are the predominant variety grown. Other varieties include Puget Beauty and Columbia. Most harvested strawberries go to processors for freezing. Some are sold later for the commercial manufacture of preserves, jams and other products.

Snohomish County ranked third in the state in red raspberry acreage and production in 1964. About 480 acres were devoted to this crop from which 1,548 tons of berries were harvested. The acreage of red raspberries has ranged between 420 and 500 acres since recovery from the 1955 freeze which resulted in a harvest of

only 55 acres in 1956. The predominant variety grown in the county is the Willamette. Other varieties grown include Sumner, Puyallup, Canby, Fairview and Washington.

In 1964, blueberries and blackberries were harvested from about 30 acres each in Snohomish County. Around 72 tons of blueberries and 141 tons of blackberries were produced in that year. The acreage of blueberries in the county has gradually declined from the high of 55 acres in 1959. Blackberries have ranged between 20 and 35 acres in recent years.

Table 20. Berry Crops: Strawberries, Raspberries and Blueberries
Snohomish County, 1940-1964

Year	Strawberries		Red Raspberries		Blueberries		Cult. Blackberries	
	Acres	Tons	Acres	Tons	Acres	Tons	Acres	Tons
1940	400	965	100	290	2	5	N.A.	N.A.
1941	360	1,000	125	290	3	5	N.A.	N.A.
1942	380	910	150	300	3	5	N.A.	N.A.
1943	300	495	175	300	5	10	N.A.	N.A.
1944	250	425	180	245	5	12	N.A.	N.A.
1945	250	475	140	420	3	6	N.A.	N.A.
1946	250	525	200	540	5	10	N.A.	N.A.
1947	650	1,700	235	650	13	20	N.A.	N.A.
1948	940	2,150	300	950	15	25	N.A.	N.A.
1949	1,050	2,300	300	625	15	30	N.A.	N.A.
1950	1,200	2,200	320	588	10	10	5	15
1951	1,500	2,100	300	592	10	12	15	40
1952	1,650	3,725	260	536	15	20	20	45
1953	1,650	5,050	420	985	25	25	30	50
1954	1,500	3,500	440	918	35	30	30	35
1955	1,400	3,000	450	990	30	35	30	50
1956	350	350	55	40	30	45	--	--
1957	1,000	2,735	450	1,460	40	70	30	38
1958	1,000	2,800	485	1,270	40	75	20	50
1959	1,010	3,750	500	1,310	55	85	20	30
1960	1,000	3,380	470	1,400	50	80	20	50
1961	1,080	3,130	430	1,258	45	86	30	98
1962	1,050	2,888	420	1,470	40	68	35	100
1963	940	2,045	450	1,674	40	115	35	130
1964	700	1,768	480	1,548	30	72	30	141

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Small Grains

Oats constitute the main small grain produced in Snohomish County. Since 1939, however, land devoted to oats has decreased from about 5,300 acres to 400 acres in 1962. About 24,000 bushels of oats were harvested in 1962.

In 1964, wheat was harvested from about 100 acres in Snohomish County. Production amounted to 3,900 bushels and was composed entirely of winter wheat. Since 1939, acreage has ranged between 1,400 acres in 1940 to virtually none in 1962. Both spring and winter wheat have been grown in the county with the latter predominating.

Table 21. Winter Wheat and Spring Wheat
Snohomish County, 1939-1964

Year	Winter Wheat			Spring Wheat		
	Harvested Acres	Yield (Bushels Per Acre)	Production (Bushels)	Harvested Acres	Yield (Bushels Per Acre)	Production (Bushels)
1939	830	19.2	15,940	50	21.0	1,050
1940	1,300	20.0	26,000	100	20.0	2,000
1941	100	50.0	5,000	100	30.0	3,000
1942	30	50.0	1,500	120	42.5	5,100
1943	50	24.0	1,200	40	30.0	1,200
1944	90	47.2	4,250	30	18.0	540
1945	80	40.0	3,200	120	50.0	6,000
1946	110	46.4	5,100	70	27.1	1,900
1947	40	62.0	2,480	40	30.0	1,200
1948	60	40.0	2,400	40	30.0	1,200
1949	400	20.0	8,000	200	24.5	4,900
1950	290	34.0	9,860	70	49.0	3,430
1951	330	35.0	11,550	70	22.7	1,590
1952	160	36.0	16,560	60	24.0	1,440
1953	250	41.0	10,250	50	39.0	1,950
1954	210	35.0	7,350	70	40.0	2,800
1955	160	29.0	4,640	150	33.0	4,950
1956	30	39.0	1,170	200	33.0	6,600
1957	180	58.0	10,440	270	43.0	11,610
1958	140	45.0	6,300	120	23.0	2,760
1959	100	40.0	4,000	20	35.0	700
1960	60	55.0	3,300	20	20.0	400
1961	90	33.0	2,970	10	27.0	270
1962	--	--	--	--	--	--
1963	70	43.0	3,010	--	--	--
1964	100	39.0	3,900	--	--	--

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Barley and rye complete the list of the small grains grown in Snohomish County. Since 1939, barley has ranged between 160 acres in 1952 and 20 acres in 1956. In 1964, about 2,400 bushels were harvested from 60 acres. Rye has fluctuated under 140 acres since 1939 with little or no acreage devoted to this crop in some years. In 1962, about 1,200 bushels were produced from a total of 40 acres in the county.

The general reduction of cropland in small grains may be partly attributed to the decline in the work-horse population within Snohomish County and in nearby marketing areas. Farmers have turned from grains to other crops such as vegetables and berries which realize a higher cash return per acre.

Table 22. Wheat and Barley: Acreage, Yield and Production
Snohomish County, 1939-1964

Year	All Wheat			Barley		
	Harvested Acres	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)	Harvested Acres	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)
1939	880	19.3	16,990	120	53.0	6,360
1940	1,400	26.0	28,200	120	48.3	5,800
1941	200	40.0	8,000	130	44.0	5,720
1942	150	44.0	6,600	160	42.0	6,720
1943	90	26.7	2,400	140	39.0	5,460
1944	120	39.9	4,790	110	39.0	4,290
1945	200	46.0	9,200	100	40.0	4,000
1946	180	38.9	7,000	90	48.0	4,320
1947	80	46.0	3,680	90	43.0	3,870
1948	100	36.0	3,600	100	41.0	4,100
1949	600	21.5	12,900	90	44.0	3,960
1950	360	36.9	13,290	90	46.0	4,140
1951	400	32.8	13,140	80	42.0	3,360
1952	520	34.6	18,000	70	40.0	2,800
1953	300	40.7	12,200	70	35.0	2,450
1954	280	36.2	10,150	70	33.0	2,310
1955	310	30.9	9,590	80	40.0	3,200
1956	230	33.8	7,770	20	42.0	840
1957	450	49.0	22,050	50	43.0	2,150
1958	260	34.8	9,060	80	40.0	3,200
1959	120	39.2	4,700	100	40.0	4,000
1960	80	46.2	3,700	40	40.0	1,600
1961	100	32.4	3,240	30	36.0	1,080
1962	—	—	—	20	36.0	720
1963	70	43.0	3,010	20	45.0	900
1964	100	39.0	3,900	60	40.0	2,400

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Table 23. Oats and Rye: Acreage, Yield and Production
Snohomish County, 1939-1962

Year	Oats			Rye		
	Harvested Acres	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)	Harvested Acres	Yield (bushels per acre)	Production (bushels)
1939	5,300	70.0	371,000	50	30.0	1,500
1940	4,500	62.0	279,000	30	10.0	300
1941	3,900	68.0	265,200	80	14.4	1,150
1942	3,400	66.0	224,400	80	27.0	2,160
1943	3,000	68.0	204,000	30	15.0	450
1944	2,700	61.0	164,700	—	—	—
1945	2,750	55.5	152,600	—	—	—
1946	2,660	63.0	167,500	—	—	—
1947	2,800	66.0	184,800	10	19.0	190
1948	3,950	60.0	237,000	20	22.5	450
1949	3,980	69.0	274,600	20	13.5	270
1950	3,450	62.0	213,900	20	10.5	210
1951	3,100	56.0	173,600	20	11.0	220
1952	3,000	63.0	189,000	50	12.0	600
1953	2,670	55.6	148,500	90	16.0	1,440
1954	2,700	44.0	118,800	100	14.5	1,450
1955	1,600	75.0	120,000	140	15.9	2,230
1956	1,300	75.0	97,500	80	13.5	1,080
1957	1,800	74.5	134,100	90	26.0	2,340
1958	1,400	45.0	63,000	70	32.0	2,240
1959	900	51.0	45,900	90	13.5	1,220
1960	510	64.5	32,900	40	22.0	880
1961	340	50.0	17,000	100	30.0	3,000
1962	400	60.0	24,000	40	30.0	1,200

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Field Corn

Field corn is one of the minor crops grown in Snohomish County. Corn harvested for grain in the county amounted to 3,280 bushels from 40 acres in 1962. After reaching a high of 120 acres in 1949 and 1950, acreage decreased to 10 acres in 1953. It increased to 50 acres by 1956 but during 1957-1960, no field corn was reported in Snohomish County. In 1961, 50 acres were reported. Yields in 1961 and 1962 were much higher than those prior to 1956. Corn cut for silage has been more important than field corn in Snohomish County.

Table 24. Field Corn: Acreage, Yield and Production
Snohomish County, 1939-1962

Year	Field Corn		
	Harvested Acres	Yield (Bu. per Acre)	Production (Bushels)
1939	30	47.0	1,410
1940	20	45.0	900
1941	20	32.0	640
1942	20	23.0	460
1943	10	11.0	110
1944	10	10.0	100
1945	20	25.0	500
1946	60	28.2	1,690
1947	90	26.0	2,340
1948	70	28.0	1,960
1949	120	18.0	2,160
1950	120	27.0	3,240
1951	90	22.1	1,990
1952	50	30.0	1,500
1953	10	33.0	330
1954	30	48.7	1,460
1955	30	37.0	1,110
1956	50	47.0	2,350
1957	--	--	--
1958	--	--	--
1959	--	--	--
1960	--	--	--
1961	50	78.0	3,900
1962	40	82.0	3,280

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Other Field Crops: Potatoes, Mint, Peas and Red Clover Seed

Snohomish County's potato acreage has declined since the 1940's. In 1962, 1,890 tons were harvested from 130 acres. Commercial acreages of potatoes are grown mostly in the area around Monroe.

According to the latest Census of Agriculture, there were 200 acres of dry field and seed peas, 30 acres of mint, and 9 acres of red clover seed in the county in 1959. About 320,600 pounds of dry field and seed peas were harvested during that year. Also, production of mint for oil totaled 1,965 pounds while 2,400 pounds of red clover seed was harvested.

Table 25. Potatoes: Acreage, Yield and Production
Snohomish County, 1945-1962

Year	Potatoes		
	Harvested Acres	Yield (Cwt. Per Acre)	Production (Cwt.)
1945	600	130	78,000
1946	400	130	52,000
1947	290	180	52,200
1948	320	210	67,200
1949	250	200	50,000
1950	500	200	100,000
1951	450	231	104,000
1952	430	240	103,200
1953	250	226	56,400
1954	230	240	55,200
1955	250	236	59,000
1956	240	286	68,000
1957	190	263	50,000
1958	150	260	39,000
1959	140	271	38,000
1960	100	320	32,000
1961	130	300	39,000
1962	130	291	37,800

Source: Statistical Reporting Service, U.S.D.A.

Tree Fruit, Nuts and Grapes

Most fruit trees and grape vines in Snohomish County are in small plantings and production is largely for home use. In earlier years, there was greater interest in tree fruits such as apples, prunes, pears and cherries, but commercial orchards and orchards for home use have decreased. In 1959, the Census of Agriculture count of fruit trees of bearing age was as follows: 1,997 apples, 810 prunes, 793 cherries, 398 pears, 261 peaches and 5 apricots.

Table 26. Fruit Trees of Bearing Age, Snohomish County, 1900-1959

Year	Apple	Pear	Peach	Cherry	Plum & Prune	Apricot
1900	37,596	3,081	165	3,033	12,777	5
1910	41,983	4,004	330	4,920	10,254	61
1920	59,542	9,914	484	10,162	13,219	2
1930	38,827	21,137	692	30,932	12,060	28
1940	36,496	9,299	782	29,091	12,768	84
1950	21,152	4,744	3,494	9,927	7,055	97
1954	4,467	944	5,043	2,199	1,078	8
1959	1,997	398	261	793	810	5

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture

Table 27. Nuts: Trees of All Ages and Production
Snohomish County, 1940-1959

Year	Filberts		English Walnuts	
	Trees of All Ages	Production (pounds)	Trees of All Ages	Production (pounds)
1940	15,044	21,653	835	7,182
1945	17,954	99,143	817	5,041
1950	14,071	43,622	871	7,264
1954	12,203	40,036	217	602
1959	1,638	7,978	44	213

Source: U. S. Census of Agriculture

Snohomish County's production of filbert nuts has declined since the end of World War II. In 1945, over 99,000 pounds were harvested compared with only 7,978 pounds in 1959. The county also produces minor amounts of English walnuts which have been on a decline in recent years. Only 213 pounds were harvested in 1959 compared with 7,264 pounds in 1950. Commercial production of grapes is virtually nonexistent in Snohomish County. In 1959, 33 farms reported a total of only 263 vines of bearing age from which 4,353 pounds of grapes were harvested.

According to the Census of Agriculture, 131 farms in Snohomish County reported a total of 186 acres of land in bearing and nonbearing fruit orchards, groves, vineyards and planted nut trees. Five years earlier in 1954, the Census reported 265 farms with 437 acres total.